

FEDERATION NEWS SHEET

Monthly Bulletin of the World's Student Christian Federation

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Note to Editors of National Student Christian Movement Periodicals:

This information service is especially prepared for National S. C. M. publications. Please make use of it for the education of our membership in Federation matters. Credit notices are not required.

Headquarters Notes

His many friends in the Federation will be interested to know that *Eric Duncan* is now minister of St Margaret's Church, Dunfermline, Scotland. *Robert Mackie*, chairman of the W.S.C.F., has accepted an invitation to become an Associate General Secretary of the World Council of Churches with special responsibilities in relation to Reconstruction and the Youth Department. He begins his new work in December.

"The Growing Church"

Special attention is called to the Fourth Quarter issue of *The Student World* which constitutes a record of the Federation Conference on Missions, held in Holland from August 5th to 16th. It should make a valuable basis for the study of missions amongst students.

Asian Leaders' Conference

The next great Federation event is the Asian Leaders' Conference to be held from December 20th to January 4th in Kandy, Ceylon. In August a group of leaders met at Kuling, China: Kiang Wen-han and Miss Huang Siu-chi of the Chinese S.C.M. and Winburn Thomas, M. M. Thomas and Bengt Hoffman of the Federation staff. They were able to carry forward plans both for the programme and the attendance of delegates. The cost and infrequency of travel possibilities are formidable obstacles, but the national movements are determined to send delegates. Your prayers are asked for this great venture, which will bring more than a hundred picked Christian leaders in student work together for consultation, and a rediscovery of their common task in the strategic centres of Asia during these troubled and formative years.

Marécottes 1948

For three months the Federation Chalet welcomed students and student leaders from all parts of the world who came to share the life of the "family" for some time and to recover from physical or moral exhaustion. The testimony of most of the guests is that thanks to the Christian community life their faith has been strengthened and new courage given to them to face their responsibilities and the hardships of life. Worship and Bible study, excursions, discussion groups on live issues, social evenings and housework have contributed to make of the "family" an extremely

happy group. Neither rain and cold, nor the smoky kitchen succeeded in dampening its spirit.

For a number of students Marécottes 1948 will bring to mind the two weeks' "Bible Training Course" where we tried to become more familiar with the Word of God and to learn how to run Bible studies. We were very concretely faced with the fact that studying the Bible in common and in a spirit of prayer is an adventure. We discovered how much the Word of God can become a living Word through His Spirit and how relative are our own theories and our approach to it. We hope to integrate this experience into the life of our movements.

Japan

From Kiyoko Takeda San, Student Secretary of Y.W.C.A.:

... It was a great pleasure to have had Bengt Hoffman visiting us here in Japan. We had missed the personal contact with W.S.C.F. for a long while and his visit meant a great deal to us. And we are very grateful to the kind greetings from W.S.C.F. which he brought to us. When he told us about the Asian Student Leaders' Conference, we smiled and said, "It is a wonderful plan, but we are sure that we cannot send our delegates just as in the case of Oslo". Oslo was a great disappointment to us and we were afraid to be disappointed again. But now the situation seems to have turned better and we are hoping to send as many delegates as possible. Bengt Hoffman told us that 15 delegates were invited from Japan. But the financial question has not been cleared. We wish we could afford it by ourselves, but in this international situation the rate of the currency is not settled yet and it is difficult to pay all the cost...

I have received a nice letter from M. M. Thomas about the Asian Conference. He must be very busy, and I wish I could be a help to him. I do hope he would visit us in Japan and tell us more about the Conference and also about the youth in India. We are also looking forward to seeing Winburn Thomas.

Now I am very busy in preparing for the summer conferences. The national student conferences we are planning are these.

1. Y.W.C.A. National Student Conference, July 13-17, 1948 at Gotemba. — Theme: *Man, Society, World* — Christian Students in the Historical Reality. Address will be on the theme, and *Christianity and Marxism*, and *Gospel and Culture*.

2. *Y.M.C.A.-Y.W.C.A. Joint Conference*, July 17-19, 1948. Theme: The Christian Student Movement and the Question of Cooperation of Boys and Girls in it.
3. *Y.M.C.A. National Student Conference*, July 19-23, 1948. Theme: The Progress of History and Christian Students. Addresses will be on the Theme, the Doctrine of Man in Niebuhr's Theology, Christianity and Marxism, Anatomy of the Society of Japan and Christianity, etc.

From report on Japan by Bengt R. Hoffman :

Samples of questions asked by Japanese students during discussions :

What are the trends of thought among the Chinese Christian students ?

How strong is communism among Chinese students ?

Is there much hostility and hatred towards us among Chinese students ?

Is there anything concrete we can do for China as Christians ?

Could we raise money for China ?

How many real Christians are there in an old Christian country like Sweden ?

What about Sweden and Russia ? How do German professors and students live and study now ?

What happened to the Hitler youth students of Germany ?

What are the significant problems facing French students ?

Please tell us about the educational system of France ?

What does your expression "one Church" mean ?

How could we best evangelize among our fellow-students ?

How are national S.C.M.s organised ?

What does the world think of Japanese students ?

What kind of student organisations are there in France, Germany, and China ?

What is the attitude of Christians toward the spreading communism in Europe ?

What is the world situation of communism ?

What should be the Christian attitude toward communism ? What can we answer our communist co-students ?

Which are the member organisations of the W.S.R. ?

Is there fellowship and cooperation between Roman Catholic and Protestant students in any part of the world ?

Canada

From a letter of G. M. Hutchinson :

...We have three Work Camps operating again this summer — Student-in-Industry Camps at Brantford and Montreal and a Student-in-Agriculture Camp at Dixie — in all some 75 students, including Canadians from all provinces, many Americans, one from Colombia, several from Trinidad and one from France. Certainly the camps do develop great depth and strength for the work of the Movement.

We were delighted during the last week to make the acquaintance of students from other Movements. Mr. Modris Snore of Latvia had been given my name by Mr. Urdze. Modris has completed one year in the University of Riga and has one year hospital training, since he intends to study medicine. He came to Canada as a D. P. and has now completed his ten

months' contract in the bush. I went with him last week to visit the mental hospital in London, Ontario, where he has applied for a job. He hopes to improve his English, save some money and proceed to study medicine. His coming has made us aware of the large numbers of students coming over as D. P.'s and gives us a new job to do in providing general assistance and in finding the S.C.M.'ers amongst them...

Nigeria

Aggrey Memorial College :

The Easter week of this year was a bright one in the history of the S.C.M. here. The week saw us very busy, despite the fact that we had the School's curriculum to face. On one of the week-days, all members, students and senior friends went out for social service in a neighbouring village which is about one and a half miles from us. There we cleared a very useful but neglected road, in course of which we came across a broken wooden bridge which the students restored to normal order by its repair. The work took us four and a half hours while the length of the road is 880 yards.

The afternoon of Easter Day saw us in the General Meeting. After spending a few minutes in discussion, we switched over to our literary activities. The President led a discussion on 'The Place of Women in the Moslem World', after which one of our Senior Friends led another discussion on the 'Value of Religious Education'. Both speeches brought to light the many misconceptions which are prevalent in this area. In the evening we assembled in our general reading group where members read nothing else but S.C.M. books, pamphlets and magazines; also, possible explanations were given to students' questions by senior friends. As the School closes on the 16th April it is not possible to arrange to do anything for Federation Week, but we might do something next term.

Gold Coast

From a letter :

The Gold Coast Conference is marvellously taking shape for September 9th to 13th in Achimota. 108 students have registered up to date and more — a few more — are coming in. They represent the new Gold Coast University College and Achimota Teacher Training College (Post Secondary) and the largely post primary Church Teacher Training Colleges — Methodist and Presbyterian — Akropong, Abivi, Krobo, Wesley, Mmofraturu and Agogo. There are to be four theological students, two Presbyterian, one Methodist and one Anglican. It is clear that the travels of Colin Forrester-Paton have stirred up interest and he gave us much valuable help in arranging the Conference before he went on leave. Many of those coming, however, are very young and immature, some of them being third year post-primary students, though, of course, more advanced in years and experience of life than that would indicate in Britain. Others coming are veterans, with several years of teaching at their backs.

The theme of the Conference is to be "The Christian Faith in our Day". It is meant to have reference to the Gold Coast. There is to be group discussion on (1) The Christian in Politics, (2) Christ and Tigare (a prominent Gold Coast fetish), (3) Prayer and the True Life, (4) The Christian Family.

I know that our Conference will find a place with the others in the prayers of the Federation staff and we shall be remembering the Federation and those who are doing so much on its behalf.

Our Conference prayer is: "O Lord our God, we offer Thee all we do. What is useless to Thee, wilt Thou speedily bring to nought, and what Thou canst use, wilt Thou transform by the Power of Thy Spirit into Thine own work. For Jesus' sake, Amen."

Australia

From the annual report :

1947 and 1948 probably register the highest enrolment which our Universities will reach during the post-war period. A community of 28,000 students presents the Movement with a tremendous challenge which it is not at all easy to meet. In Sydney and Melbourne Universities there are about 10,000 and 8,000 students. A Student Christian Movement working amongst such a number needs a combination of enthusiasm and maturity in its leaders. It needs sustained but inconspicuous support from the best people on the University staff, and from clergy and ministers who know their Christianity and the currents of thought and feeling which are attacking it to-day. The purely administrative problems of an S.C.M. working in any of our universities to-day have become very large.

And yet the year has seen encouraging signs. Though the university is no longer a community, the S.C.M. in many places has been a real community. Many people have taken the decisive step of committing themselves to Christ as a result of its work.

The Mission to Melbourne University, conducted by the Bishop of Riverina and the Rev. A.C. Watson last July, provided a systematic and uncompromising statement of what Christianity is. It won over many who were only "on the fringe" and consolidated both them and those who were already Christians for the further work of penetration. The S.C.M. members who shared in the Mission found that their knowledge of God grew deeper as they took up the task of evangelism.

A disturbing feature is that the study work of the Movement is still lagging. For this reason the Officers' Conference at Armidale concentrated on corporate study of the Epistle to the Philippians. Students themselves took it in turns to lead the circles, and were enthusiastic about the experiment. While it is obvious that more training would be needed for the leadership of circles at the universities, this method may be one way of generating enthusiasm for solid Bible study.

Vacation conferences have been the most prominent and most valuable regular feature of the year's programme. Fourteen have been held, with a total attendance of about 1,000 students. Prayers, chapel, services, study circles, public addresses and social activities have also been organized.

Generally speaking, the members of the Movement have taken a full share in worth-while University activities, notably in the work for the World Student Relief appeal. Members of the Movement present at recent N.U.A.U.S. conferences have been asked to arrange services on the Sundays for those who wish to worship. Yet the Movement is aware that in many cases the best students are not challenged by its work, and that in most cases the life of the University goes on its way without being disturbed by the Christians in its midst. All our members and friends are asked to help us by prayer, thought and work to bring the challenge of Christ more effectively before all students.

India

From the "Student Outlook" :

The Youth Christian Council of Action, Tambaram, is a group working under the auspices of the S.C.M. here. We are doing some practical work which, we think, can be done in every college. There is a definite programme of action or a "rule of life" of the Y.C.C.A. Briefly it is this :

(1) *Manual Labour.* Gardening is done in the "rural centre" of the College Rural Service League, and we raise some useful vegetables. There is a day fixed in a week when every member has to go there and work for an hour. To make ourselves feel that manual labour is not a menial thing, we sweep our own rooms and wash some of our clothes.

(2) *Study.* We do group study one hour a week on some living and useful topic. In fact the Y.C.C.A. was first formed in an S.C.M. camp, when the campers felt that there must be a group of young men who can take a part in the social and political activities of life with clear Christian ideals. It is with this view that some of our members are sent from our group to be in the executives of student organizations like Students' Congress, Students' Federation, etc. "Christianity challenges Capitalism", "Christianity and Communism", etc., are some of the subjects of our study.

(3) *Intercession.* One night — we do it on Sunday night — we meet together for intercession. We are never short of subjects for intercession, for the more we try to study, the greater the problems we find to be brought in our prayer. We have found it helpful to fast on that night of intercession. Some may find it possible to give the food thus saved to the poor. But even if that is not possible it has a disciplinary and spiritually strengthening value. No group which is conscious of its need — and every group should be so — can work without this aspect of intercession.

(4) *Witnessing.* An attempt is made to meet our friends individually whenever possible. One night is set apart in particular when we meet together and after prayer disperse and share with some friends what our religion means to us. It has proved helpful to go as a team to other colleges or parishes for witnessing.

(5) *Budget.* Every member is expected to prepare his budget at the beginning of each term and try his very best to abide by it. Discussing the budget in common has helped some to make better plans for expenditure. This gives a new discipline in the matter of spending money. Sharing the budget also is sometimes practised.

(6) *Propaganda.* On vital questions when we feel we as Christians have to say something, pamphlets are issued and distributed among the members of the College. The seemingly secular methods of propaganda, skilled planning and wisely directed action are eminently fitted for evangelisation; and should we not exploit these means in all Christian ways with the glorious purpose of showing Christ to others? We have to love God with our minds, and it is here that our brain and the spirit of cooperative team work is demanded...

We know what we do is only an apology for what could be done by a fully surrendered group. But by our work we can get a glimpse of that vision of the possibility of what could be achieved by such groups, and we thought that we might share with our friends from other colleges this idea, so that we may concentrate on strengthening the S.C.M. by forming such cells within it.

WORLD STUDENT RELIEF

Interview on Germany

From an interview with a student from Kiel University in the British Zone of Germany :

Q. What has brought you to Geneva ?

I have been participating as German delegate in the Annual Conference of I.S.S. at the Chalet des Etudiants at Combloux and the Standing Committee of W.S.R. It was a great pleasure for me to learn that, in spite of the immense needs all over the world, which were brought home to me by the reports of delegates from many countries, the programme for the work of W.S.R. in Germany during the next year again brings many good schemes and special plans. Now I am here to discuss the details of student relief in Germany for the coming year with Geneva Headquarters.

Q. But don't you think that things will improve for students now that the currency reform has taken place ?

Well, as far as the students are concerned, you will only be able to judge after the beginning of the new term. So far the currency reform seems to have had a bad effect for the students. More than 50 % are now forced to earn the money they need for their study fees and maintenance, many of them by manual work for about eight hours a day. 30 % who could not find jobs or don't receive enough money from their parents, and who are physically not suited for strenuous manual work in addition to their studies, are expected to be forced to stop their studies at the beginning of the next term, but these students are often the most gifted.

Q. Have the students made efforts to solve some of these problems themselves ?

The currency reform, but not its exact date, had been announced some months ago, so we tried to protect the students against its worst effects. We discussed our problems with the Ministers of Culture and Finance to get financial support after the currency reform. We asked every possible institution, for example trade unions, various political parties, industrial and commercial firms, to give scholarships. We tried to get jobs through the Ministries of Labour and established ourselves as employment agencies for students.

Q. Can you tell us something more about the student self-help projects that have been set up ?

Within the universities we improved the mensas, as the student restaurants are called, which are run by the student services at each university. Furthermore, we established shops where students could buy their rations, as well as laundries, tailors' shops, cobblers'

shops, translation and typing bureaux run by and only for students. During the first week after the currency reform we realised that only little help can be expected from the State. So we must help ourselves as far as possible, and we have already had some real, concrete results.

Q. What help do you think W.S.R. could best give German students ?

It is true that conditions in Western Germany improved after the currency reform. Food, clothing, paper and all the everyday necessities of life are beginning to appear in the shops, but prices are rising and students are short of money. Because of this our self-help shops and establishments are absolutely essential, and if W.S.R. could support these schemes with many small but necessary articles like shoe-leather, tinctacks, soap, thread and so on, this would be of enormous value to us. But apart from this the intellectual help in the form of standard libraries, periodicals, subscriptions, such as we received during the past year, is of equal importance. We are more grateful than we can say for anything which W.S.R. can give us.

The chief needs of Italian students

a) *Books and study material.* University libraries, even when undamaged cannot cope with swollen numbers of students, and find it difficult to replenish their stocks of books owing to high prices and unfavorable currency exchange. Students cannot afford the high prices of text-books required for their courses.

b) *Housing.* In larger centers like Rome and Naples, where a large proportion of the students come from out of town, the housing problem is desperate. Almost no provision for housing is made by the universities, and the cost of private rooms is extremely high. Where hostels exist, students are often required to provide their own bedding, and this is impossible for students from bombed-out homes.

c) *Medicines and help to tubercular students.* The tuberculosis rate is high in Italy, and university health services are short of medicines and equipment to care for the sick. There is as yet no university sanatorium in Italy, and students can only be hospitalized in large general sanatoria. They need special help in extra food, clothing, and books.

d) *Aid to Giulian refugees.* These are students from the former Italian territory around Trieste, now ceded to Yugoslavia. Large numbers of students have crossed the border and now flood already over-crowded Italian Universities. They are in most cases destitute, and are a heavy burden on university welfare services already over-burdened with their own students.

A PRAYER FOR THE ASIAN LEADERS' CONFERENCE

The prayers of all members of the Federation are asked in the next two months of preparation for the Conference in Ceylon at Christmas.

O Lord, who hast given unto us, thy servants, the privilege of serving thee in and through the World's Student Christian Federation, we offer thee humble thanks for all that thou hast been pleased to do through the Federation for the university and for the Church. We thank thee for those whom thou hast raised up amongst us to be powerful witnesses to thy Word, for the faithfulness of those who have kept firm in time of strife and persecution, and for the ever-renewed gift of unity in thee bestowed on us amidst differences of race and tradition.

Grant that the Ceylon conference may prove a time in which thy Word will be heard with power. Thou didst give such grace to the first followers of thy Son that they readily obeyed His calling and followed Him without delay ; call forth, now, men and women who will gladly respond to this voice so that the Movements in Asia may be strengthened, the unity of all Christians advanced and the work of the Church deepened and extended. For our Lord's sake.

Amen.